

the responsibilities given to it by Congress. It means fully funding IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, so we finally fulfill the promise Congress made to students with disabilities and their families nearly 50 years ago.

It means strengthening civil rights protections and addressing segregation in schools. It means investing in public schools, not diverting Federal dollars into voucher programs that funnel money to private schools, including religious schools.

Circumstances have changed, but the American system of public education has not yet adapted. We need a public education system that meets the moment for today's students and tomorrow's. We need an education system that prepares students not to pass a test but to think critically and build a future. We need to support educators who make that possible, and we need to remove those barriers that stand between children and opportunity.

The Transforming Education for the Future Act is a blueprint for doing just that. It strengthens public education, and it reclaims the promise that every child in America deserves the opportunity to grow, learn, and succeed.

Mr. Speaker, that is the future our students deserve. That is the future we should build together.

RECOGNIZING DONNA MILLS

(Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Donna Mills of Hesston on her election as the national president of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary.

A life member of the Standing Stone VFW Post 1754 in Huntingdon, Donna has served the VFW Auxiliary in numerous roles, including auxiliary, district, and department president.

Donna joined the organization at the age of 16 on the eligibility of her grandfather, who had served in the U.S. Army during World War II. Her commitment to the VFW Auxiliary is exemplary.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of constituents throughout Huntingdon County and the entire 13th Congressional District, I congratulate Donna on her election to this impactful leadership position.

HONORING JUDGE PATRICK JONES

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, it is with sorrow that I rise to honor the life and public service of Pat Jones, who recently passed away at his farm in Logan Township.

Pat served as a magisterial district judge for 39 years in Blair County. Most recently, he was elected to his first term as the Logan Township supervisor in 2019.

A United States Marine Corps veteran, Pat has been described as a proud public servant who worked hard to ensure that the justice system continued meeting aspirational goals.

Mr. Speaker, as we pause to remember Pat's legacy of leadership and service, we also remember his family and keep them in our prayers. Join me in honoring the memory of Judge Pat Jones.

RECOGNIZING NEWRY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF BLAIR COUNTY

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, with appreciation I rise to recognize Newry Lutheran Church of Blair County on the 225th anniversary of its founding.

This milestone commemorates more than two centuries of faithful worship, Christian service, and ministry within the Newry community and beyond.

Founded in 1801, Newry Lutheran Church has served generations of individuals and families through worship, education, outreach, and compassionate care.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of everyone in the 13th Congressional District, I congratulate Reverend Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte and the entire Newry Lutheran congregation on their 225th anniversary milestone and express my gratitude for the many ways that the church serves the community.

RECOGNIZING ELIZABETH SCHLUSSER

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, with respect and admiration, I rise to recognize Elizabeth Schlusser of Newville for her induction into the Pennsylvania Voter Hall of Fame.

Induction into the Hall of Fame acknowledges and honors individuals who have voted in at least 50 consecutive November elections. The Voter Hall of Fame was established in 1986 and includes more than 25,000 voters statewide who were inducted over the last four decades.

As America continues to celebrate our semiquincentennial of our founding as a free and independent Republic, we take collective pride in our Nation's role as a global defender of democratic ideals, including the rights of citizens to vote in free and fair elections.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the constituents throughout the 13th Congressional District, I congratulate Elizabeth on this remarkable patriotic distinction and thank her for a level of civic engagement that is a true inspiration to all Pennsylvanians.

FUTURE OF QATARI AIR FORCE ONE PLANE

(Mr. COURTNEY of Connecticut was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, on September 4, President Trump was asked about the future of the Qatari Air Force One plane, which, after a messy rollout in July, he flew on to Ireland this past weekend and said: "I haven't made a decision, but it will probably go to the museum. It is scheduled to go to the museum."

Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction

over the Air Force executive airlift programs, I will remind the House that this aircraft is not the property of any one person, including the President of the United States. That plane is the property of the U.S. Government and U.S. taxpayers, and it is under the control of the U.S. Air Force.

It is a plane the U.S. taxpayers spent hundreds of millions of dollars over the last years to retrofit prior to its maiden flight to Turkiye for the NATO Summit.

After it was discovered by the Secret Service that the plane had serious vulnerabilities and the President flew home on one of the older Air Force Ones, the Qatari plane went into another overhaul and received maxed out upgrades, as the President said, which cost even more taxpayer funds. Just a few days ago, it was announced that the Air Force had contracted a new pilot simulator training program for the Qatari plane to the tune of \$45.3 million.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, the U.S. taxpayer has huge skin in the game regarding the future of this plane. It is also clear that this plane has ample long-term service life left in it. At the time it was gifted to the Air Force, it had only 800 hours of flight time, which is a fraction of the normal full-service life of a comparable Boeing 747 jet. Given its low mileage and all the expenditure of government money and training, the notion that this plane should be mothballed in a couple years and donated to a Trump museum is an insult to the intelligence of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, some may point to the example of the Air Force One plane at the Reagan Library as justification for President Trump's claim that he has the right to abscond with this plane after he leaves office.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Reagan Library plane was in Air Force service for 13 years after he left office in 1988 and served President George Herbert Walker Bush, President Clinton, and President George W. Bush until it was decommissioned in 2001.

The plane then went through a well-established legal process for transfer of excess Federal property that President Reagan had no control over, which is designed to protect the interests of the taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, everything about this Qatari gifted plane has been problematic: the unanswered questions of a foreign emolument, the lack of transparency on the cost of the initial retrofit, the rocky maiden voyage to Turkiye, and the President's repeated claims of ownership and control of the plane, which by law he does not have. It is clear Congress needs to intervene to prohibit any unlawful attempt to send it "to the museum."

Today, Armed Services Committee Ranking Member ADAM SMITH and I will be introducing the Safeguarding Taxpayer Investment for Executive Airlift Act, which will very simply prohibit the transfer of the Qatari Air

Force One, known as VC-25B bridge aircraft, from the possession of the U.S. Air Force.

As I have made clear today, after all the money and work invested in the retrofit of this practically brand-new Boeing 747, as well as the new \$45 million pilot training contract that the Air Force just announced, the country and the American taxpayer deserve to get its money's worth from this plane. At a time when so many Americans are struggling to make ends meet, that is not too much to ask.

Its service life will last for years. Just as the Air Force One plane that flew for over a decade after Ronald Reagan left office, this Air Force One should be used to benefit the Nation and not be used as a vanity project.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is about exercising congressional stewardship of property that belongs to the U.S. taxpayer, and it should be easy for every Member of this Chamber to support. To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln, it asserts what is both legally the right thing to do, but also morally the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me and Ranking Member SMITH to cosponsor this commonsense measure.

□ 1215

RECOGNIZING THE SUDANESE-AMERICAN IOWA NATIONAL SOCCER TEAM CLUB

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS of Iowa was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Sudanese-American Iowa National Soccer Team Club for its outstanding performance at the Sudanese American Soccer Federation's 25th Anniversary Tournament.

Competing at the national level for the third time, the Iowa team earned three awards that reflect the talent, character, and dedication of its players. The club received the Fair Play Award for its sportsmanship, discipline, teamwork, and respect throughout the tournament.

Olamilekan Ojo, known as Messi, was recognized with the Five-Star Outstanding Player Award for his exceptional performance, and the club also received a Tournament Participation Award. These accomplishments are a testament to the team's hard work and its commitment to representing Iowa with pride.

Beyond competition, the club uses soccer to develop young athletes, build leadership skills and character, promote healthy lifestyles, and strengthen community connections.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the coaches and all the young athletes on the Iowa National Soccer Team Club, and I look forward to seeing all that they accomplish in the future.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL TRUCK DRIVER
APPRECIATION WEEK

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate National

Truck Driver Appreciation Week and recognize the hardworking men and women who keep Iowa and our Nation moving.

Iowa is home to 37,530 truck drivers, many of whom spend long hours on the road delivering the food, fuel, supplies, and products our families, farms, and businesses rely on every day.

From the truck stops along Interstate 80 to the world's largest truck stop, the Iowa 80 Truck Stop in Walcott, trucking is a vital part of Iowa's economy and way of life. These drivers help keep our grocery store shelves stocked, support Iowa's farmers and manufacturers, and ensure goods can reach communities across our State and country. They even deliver lifesaving medical supplies and organs.

In fact, more than 60 percent of the communities in Iowa depend exclusively on trucks to move their goods. The trucking industry also provides good-paying jobs for Iowans and supports thousands of locally owned businesses.

I am grateful for the dedication and sacrifice of Iowa's truck drivers and the vital role they play in supporting our families, strengthening our local businesses, and ensuring communities across Iowa have the goods and resources they need.

RECOGNIZING THE SEOL FAMILY

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share a story about an unpayable debt, a promise kept across generations, and the true meaning of the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, 75 years ago, a young refugee named Myung-Hee Seol, having survived a brutal foreign occupation and the shadow of communism, fought for his life in the Korean war. On a frozen, desolate hill, an American marine pulled him from the brink of death—igniting a spark of gratitude that would shape a family's destiny forever.

Decades later, his son, the international artist Kacey Seol, poured his heart into honoring that nameless marine. He created Alliance 70, a breathtaking 10-foot canvas composed of 300,000 microscopic historic images of both nations harmonizing into one powerful unit that now hangs permanently inside the Pentagon. It is a stunning, living monument to the alliance that bought his family's freedom.

Today, that sacred promise is fulfilled at Rock Island Arsenal in my district. The refugee's grandson, Dr. Jason Seol—serving dually as an U.S. Army Reserve officer and an Army civilian at First Army Headquarters—is living the American Dream his grandfather could only imagine. He also pioneered their innovative Holistic Health and Fitness, H2F, martial arts program, training our Nation's soldiers in physical and mental readiness.

As we continue celebrating 250 years of our Nation, the Seol family reminds us freedom is not free. You earn it daily by what you do for your family, your community, and your country. Their 75-year journey is the ultimate

testament that American freedom is a priceless gift that is meant to be paid forward and preserved.

Mr. Speaker, I wish a very happy birthday to my sister-in-law, Susan. Happy birthday, Susan.

Mr. Speaker, I wish a happy birthday to my husband, Curt Meeks. Happy birthday to my husband, and I hope he has many more birthdays to come.

COMMEMORATING THE 63RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE 16TH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH BOMBING

(Ms. SEWELL of Alabama was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 63rd anniversary of the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, and to honor the lives of four little girls whose lives were taken in one of the darkest chapters of our Nation's history.

On the morning of September 15, 1963, four young girls—Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Morris Wesley—were in the basement of the 16th Street Baptist Church preparing for Sunday school.

They were daughters. They were sisters. They were classmates and friends. They had their whole lives ahead of them.

Just before 11 o'clock that morning, 19 sticks of dynamite planted underneath the church by members of the Ku Klux Klan exploded. The blast tore through the church, and beneath the rubble were the bodies of four innocent little girls.

Sarah Collins Rudolph, Addie Mae Collins' sister, was also in the basement that morning. She survived the bomb but suffered severe injuries, including the loss of her right eye.

The tragedy did not end with the bomb exploding. As Black Alabamians took to the streets to demand justice, they were met with violence and brutality, resulting in the loss of two more children: 16-year-old Johnny Robertson and 13-year-old Virgil Ware.

For too long, their families were denied the justice that they deserved. It took more than three decades before the perpetrators of this heinous attack were finally brought to justice.

Six decades later, we must remember that these were not simply events in a history book. These were children whose lives were stolen because of the color of their skin.

While we can never undo the pain of that day, we can ensure that these precious lives are never ever forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, in 2013, I was honored to have my very first bill passed by Congress. That legislation awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the four little girls. I will never forget standing in the Oval Office as President Barack Obama signed the bill into law on the 50th anniversary of the bombing.

It was a very personal moment for me because I know that those four little girls did not get the opportunity to